

## SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### SINGLE POLICY PROGRESS AND EVALUATION OF STUDENTS 581

#### *Promotion and Retention of Students*

It is the intent of the Shrewsbury Public Schools, through the policies and procedures described below, to provide appropriate support to students who are experiencing academic difficulties.

Students who demonstrate a substantial risk of failure in major academic subjects, and for whom teachers have already made instructional modifications and sought parent\* involvement, will be referred to the Instructional Support Team (IST) by mid-year. Within the context of the regular education support services available, systematic remediation in the areas of literacy, mathematics, or behavioral performance will be provided and periodically reviewed by the team. Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be supported by their special education teams.

The promotion/retention policy of the Shrewsbury Public Schools is part of the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP). The District Curriculum Accommodation Plan summarizes the resources and programs available to allow all children access to the full curriculum of the district. Only after the provision of support services consistent with the district DCAP, and a determination that a student is not able to make effective progress, will the retention of a student be considered. This policy recognizes that retention is complex, involving many factors, and is never a guarantee of future success. Retention will be considered only after other alternatives have been unsuccessful.

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Promotion from grade to grade is based primarily upon a student's satisfactory academic achievement and good attendance record. Students considered for retention are those who have not achieved the minimum standards expected for the respective grade level and/or those who have not fulfilled attendance requirements. In any decision that affects retention, the school will share this policy with parents and staff, and adhere to all state and local regulations as they pertain to the rights of the individuals involved.

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The intent of the school district is to fully inform students and parents of the necessary steps to avoid retention. The parents of any student who may not be promoted have the right to ask for a meeting with the principal. Middle school students will be placed in the next grade upon the successful completion of pre-approved summer school courses. High school students who complete approved summer school courses, in accordance with credit requirements, will also be placed in the next grade level.

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\*Parent is used in this document and refers to guardians as well.

### *Elementary Grades*

Principals, in consultation with the Instructional Support Team, may retain students in their current grade for the subsequent school year. Retention will be considered only after other alternatives (based on IST recommendations) have been attempted. Staff will provide regular communications with the parent during the course of the school year as issues relating to a student's success begin to surface. The recommendation to retain a student shall be made, in writing to the child's parents, by May 1st. Parents who wish their child to advance to the next grade level may appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent of schools. The appeal to the superintendent should be made within ten days of the principal's letter. (The special education team will make the recommendation to the principal for promotion/retention of special education students.)

### *Middle School*

Prior to a student's assignment to the next grade, the following four areas will be reviewed and assessed by middle school personnel:

1. The skills and knowledge demonstrated by the student in the current grade.
2. The student's readiness for work at the next grade level.
3. The student's attendance record.
4. The student's success with additional support that has been provided.

The principal, in consultation with the Instructional Support Team, may retain students in their current grade for the subsequent school year. Retention will be considered, however, only after other alternatives (e.g., IST recommendations) have been implemented. Based on all of the data gathered, a student will be recommended for retention if he/she is at risk of failing two or more core subjects for the school year, as reported on the progress report. Middle school students failing two (2) or more core academic subjects (English, math, science, social studies) can be retained in grade unless an approved summer program is successfully completed. (Grades in the student's foreign language class will also be considered in determining the student's placement for the subsequent year.) A letter stating the reasons for retention shall be sent to the parents(s) by the principal by May 1st. (The special education team will make the recommendation to the principal for the promotion/retention of special education students.)

In all cases, the parents of a student being considered for retention shall be kept informed throughout the year. Teachers shall initiate a parent conference whenever it is determined that a student may be failing two subjects. Weekly progress reports (email, notes, telephone calls, etc.) shall also be utilized to keep parents informed. The decision for promotion or retention of those recommended students shall rest with the building principal. Parents who wish their child to advance to the next grade level may appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent of schools. The appeal to the superintendent should be made within ten days of the principal's letter.

### *High School*

1. In order to continue with his/her class:
  - A freshman must earn at least 21 credits by September to be classified as a sophomore.
  - A sophomore must earn at least 45 credits by September to be classified as a junior.
  - A junior must earn at least 73 credits by September to be classified as a senior.
2. Teachers, the guidance counselor and grade administrator of a student experiencing academic difficulty will review the student's progress and make appropriate plans with the student prior to the conclusion of the school year.
3. Students who pass approved summer school courses may apply these credits to be promoted to the next grade level.

**Adopted 6/18/03**